

Ammanford Urban
District Council . .

23rd Annual
REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR 1925.



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"Amman Valley Chronicle" Office, Ammanford.

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AMMANFORD.

To the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN, MADAM AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit the 23rd Annual Report (being my second) for the Administrative District of the Town of Ammanford.

Foreword.

The Ministry of Health, in the interests of economy, decreed that the Reports for the Years 1921, 1922, 1923, and 1924 should be mere frameworks, giving the barest outlines of Statistics and short accounts of the deductions to be drawn from such Statistics, and that the Report for 1925 should be more comprehensive and give a short account of the progress made in the five years.

An Annual Report depends to a great extent on information supplied by the Sanitary Inspector. A part-time Inspector was employed by you during these years, and the materials needed in drawing up a Report was meagre. The appointment of a whole-time Inspector will prove an acquisition to the Town, and I take this opportunity to testify that you have in Mr. Walters a very capable and efficient Officer in every respect.

There is no outstanding work to be recorded during these years, except that the spadework in connection with the Sewerage Scheme and the Sewage Disposal Works was done, and which at the time of writing are well advanced in construction, and will in all appearances be in operation in the near future. The ordinary matters will be dwelt upon under each particular heading, but I wish to make this observation: During the latter part of the year 1925 we had a severe outbreak of Diphtheria in the Town (and adjacent District); this, I am glad to say, has diminished, but I would point out that the facilities of transit and attractions for congregating at Cinemas, &c., and above all, the lack of an Isolation Hospital to isolate the first few cases (to nip the epidemic in the bud, as it were), militate against the control of epidemics of this

kind. I venture to state that if an Isolation Hospital had existed when the outbreak began, the epidemic would not have reached its formidable dimensions.

The General Health, judging by Statistics, compares very favourably with any part of the County, but I would advise you not to take Statistical Data—which are interesting in themselves—as a true index of the General Health, as the health of a district depends so much upon the incidence of preventable diseases.

Without enlarging further by way of introduction, I wish to tender my best thanks to your able Clerk for his kind and ready assistance given me at all times.

Natural and Social Conditions of the Area.

The Urban District of Ammanford lies low, and the greater part of it is situated between the River Llwchwr and its tributary, the River Amman, having an area of 872 acres.

Ammanford may be regarded as the centre of the Anthracite Coal-field, and its prosperity depends on the development and prosperity of the various Collieries, which are mostly just outside the Urban District.

The health of the workmen does not seem to be adversely affected by their occupation, with the one exception of Miners' Nystagmus.

Tinplates are manufactured in the Area, and here again the health of the workers may be classed as good. I may note here that various improvements have been installed in a Tinplate Factory, more especially with regard to ventilation, which must lighten the discomforts of men working in the great heat always present in such works.

The Town has supplies of Gas and Electric Light, the latter being the Town light.

The Water Supply is drawn from the source of the Llwchwr River, and is, on the whole, satisfactory. When rains are very heavy, the supply has been sometimes "muddy," and I wish to draw your attention to the fact that a Filter Bed is needed to combat this condition, which is unpleasant and gives rise to a suspicion that the supply is very bad. Considerable leakages have been noticed and steps taken to remedy these leakages have been taken with good results; but the pressure in the mains is too high for the greater portion of the District, and naturally, if there is a leakage anywhere, this high pressure causes a greater loss.

Since the establishment of the Water Supply there have been no cases of Enteric (Typhoid) Fever in the District; prior to this Supply, Enteric Fever was almost endemic, especially in the Tirydail area.

The great need of the District is a Sewerage Scheme, but this need is now being dealt with.

The Removal of Town Refuse is provided for by the Council by means of motor haulage, and is dumped on the Bettws Dump. A good deal of domestic refuse could be burned by the Householders themselves.

Owing to the fuel used being Anthracite Coal, the District is free from any Smoke nuisance, and no action for "abatement of smoke nuisance" is necessary.

Meteorology of the District.

No account of the Rainfall for 1925 is available. This is to be deplored, and I shall be pleased if some person sufficiently interested in the matter could forward me the Rainfall month by month. A record of the Rainfall at the Reservoir ought, at any rate, to be kept. The average fall per year for the last five years for the County is 53.45 inches, and this is probably a rough estimate for this particular District, bearing in mind that 1921 was a very dry year.

General Provision of Health Services.

The nearest available General Hospital is the Swansea Hospital, distant by road 20 miles. To this Hospital are conveyed serious accidents which necessitate Hospital treatment. The Ambulance facilities for conveyance of such cases are ample.

District Nurses have been appointed to attend ordinary cases of sickness in the homes under a District Nursing Association. These are two in number, as follows:—One in Bettws; one in Ammanford. These Nurses prove a great boon in the District by way of increasing the efficiency of the men as regards the output of their work, and also by way of preventing the results which would follow unskilled Nursing.

The *Maternity and Child Welfare Centre* is under the supervision of the County Council, and is held in three rooms at the Church Room, Wind Street, Ammanford. This is held on alternate Tuesdays from 4 till 6 p.m. Dr. Ernest Inman is in attendance with Nurse Matthews, together with Miss Nansi Davies, who is in charge of the various brands of Dried Milk provided.

The Mothers come in from quite long distances. This can be done easily, owing to the services of 'buses. Ante-natal cases are welcomed at the Clinic and are there dealt with, and babies from their

earliest days up to five years of age, when they become school children and pass under the care of the School Medical Services.

Glaxo and Cow & Gate Dried Milk are sold at a reduced cost to such as require it. This Centre is well attended. The cynic might say that it is owing to the female desire to meet together and talk; even so, it serves a useful purpose, because the talk is "Babies," and each Mother shows her Baby with pride, and a spirit of imitation is created amongst them, which cannot do anything but good.

General Statistics.

Area of District	...	...	872 Acres
Population	...	...	7,603
Number of Inhabited Houses	...	...	1,493
Number of Families or separate Occupiers	...	...	1,763
Rateable Value	...	...	£17,225
Sum represented by a Penny Rate	...	...	£71 15s. 5d.

Population:—

Year 1921	1922	1923	1924	1925
6,984 (Census)	7,237	7,360	7,507	7,603

Vital Statistics.

Births.—During the year, 139 Births were registered—Boys, 78; Girls, 61; 2 Boys Illegitimate. Birth-rate, 18.3 per 1,000 inhabitants. This is the same as the Birth-rate for England and Wales.

Deaths.—The Causes of Death are given according to the Registrar-General's Returns.

Total number of Deaths	...	...	72
Male	...	...	38
Female	...	...	34

giving a Death-rate of 9.4 per 1,000 inhabitants. This compares favourably with the Death-rate for England and Wales, which was 12.2 per 1,000 population.

Infantile Mortality.—Three Children died under 1 year of age. This gives a very low Death-rate for Infants, 21.5 per 1,000 Births, this being probably the lowest in the County.

Mr. Neville Chamberlain gave the following figures for Infantile Mortality for the Carmarthen Area:—

1923	1924	1925	} per 1,000 Births
72	82	80	

No deaths from Puerperal Septicæmia were reported.

Causes of Death during the Year 1925.

CAUSES OF DEATH.			M.	F.
All Causes	...	...	38	34
1 Enteric fever	...	...	...	...
2 Small-pox	...	...	...	...
3 Measles	...	...	...	...
4 Scarlet fever	...	...	...	...
5 Whooping cough	...	...	...	...
6 Diphtheria	...	...	1	...
7 Influenza	...	...	...	...
8 Encephalitis lethargica	...	...	...	...
9 Meningococcal meningitis	...	...	...	...
10 Tuberculosis of respiratory system	...	...	1	2
11 Other tuberculous diseases	...	...	1	1
12 Cancer, malignant disease	...	...	2	7
13 Rheumatic fever	...	...	...	1
14 Diabetes	...	...	...	...
15 Cerebral hæmorrhage, &c.	...	...	2	2
16 Heart disease	...	...	6	6
17 Arterio-sclerosis	...	...	2	1
18 Bronchitis	...	...	4	2
19 Pneumonia (all forms)	...	...	1	2
20 Other respiratory diseases	...	...	...	...
21 Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	...	...	1	...
22 Diarrhœa, &c. (under 2 years)	...	...	...	1
23 Appendicitis and typhlitis	...	...	...	...
24 Cirrhosis of liver	...	...	...	...
25 Acute and chronic nephritis	...	...	...	1
26 Puerperal sepsis	...	...	...	...
27 Other accidents and diseases of pregnancy and parturition	...	...	...	...
28 Congenital debility and malformation, premature birth	...	...	...	...
29 Suicide	...	...	1	...
30 Other deaths from violence	...	...	5	1
31 Other defined diseases	...	...	11	7
32 Causes ill-defined or unknown	...	...	...	...
Special Causes (included above)				
Poliomyelitis	...	...	...	...
Polioencephalitis	...	...	...	...
Deaths of Infants under 1 year	{ Total	...	...	3
	{ Illegitimate	...	...	...
<hr/>				
TOTAL BIRTHS	...	...	78	61
Legitimate	...	...	76	61
Illegitimate	...	...	2	...
<hr/>				

POPULATION 7,603.

Infectious Diseases Notified in 1925.

The following were notified during 1925:—

Scarlet Fever	...	...	5
Diphtheria	...	...	12
Pneumonia	...	...	11
Erysipelas	...	...	2
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	...	...	3
Other Forms of Tuberculosis	...	...	1
Puerperal Septicæmia	...	...	2
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	...	...	1
Total Number of Cases reported			37

In regard to the above-mentioned cases, I wish to particularly draw your attention to the fact that there is no Isolation Hospital in the District. This is to be regretted, especially in the case of a Diphtheria or Scarlet Fever outbreak. I have touched upon this point in my introduction to the Report; but I wish to draw your attention to the fact that, in addition to checking a further spread of an Epidemic by removing the cases from their homes, treatment in a Hospital, being very thorough, lessens the incidence of Sequelæ of Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria; this is important to bear in mind, as these Sequelæ may be the cause of death many years afterwards, and even if not the cause of death, they cause ill-health in after years.

One case only of Ophthalmia Neonatorum was notified in 1925; this was treated at home, and vision is unimpaired.

Diphtheria.—A few sporadic cases were notified during the year until November, when the disease assumed the proportions of a grave Epidemic; the greater number occurring in December. The source of infection could not be traced. One death occurred in December. Swabs were taken in most cases and were reported positive.

The *Midwives* are under the control of the County Council. In Ammanford they number four: one qualified by "examination" and 3 *bona-fide*—which term means they are allowed to practise because they happened to be in actual practice before 1902. As the Act is now 25 years old, you will appreciate the fact that these Midwives are now of advanced age, and their number in course of nature will soon be lessened; you will see that for such a population this number is quite inadequate.

Unmarried Mothers, Illegitimate Infants and Homeless Children are provided for at the Llandilo-fawr Union Workhouse, at Llandilo.

Veneral Diseases are treated at the Swansea Hospital. This treatment is provided free by the County Council, the latter paying the travelling expenses of such who cannot afford the fare.

Mental Deficiency Act.—An Institution is open for the admission of patients at Pantglas Hall, Carmarthen.

Tuberculosis.

The Welsh National Memorial provides one Tuberculosis Dispensary, which is visited every Monday for the examination of patients. This is held at Brynderwen Road, Tirydail, on Mondays, 2.30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Staff.—Dr. Howell M. Williams (whole-time), and one whole-time Nurse.

In addition to this Dispensary, accommodation is provided in the following

Sanatoria.

The South Wales Sanatorium, Talgarth ...				Male Patients
The North Wales Sanatorium, Llan-gwyfan ...	...	...	...	Pulmonary Female Patients
				and Surgical Tuberculosis in Men, Women, and Children
The West Wales Sanatorium, Llanybyther ...	...	...	...	Women and Children Pulmonary Cases
The Pentegyn Open-air Home, Menai Bridge ...	...	...	...	Female Children Pulmonary Cases

Hospitals.

The Glan Ely Hospital, Fairwater, near Cardiff ...				Men, Women, and Children Pulmonary and Surgical Cases.
Cimla Hospital, Neath ...	...	...	...	Male and Female
Tregaron Hospital, Tregaron	...	...	...	Pulmonary Cases
Sealyham Hospital, Wolf's Castle	...	...	...	"
Meadowslea Hospital, Penyffordd	...	...	...	"
Brynsion Hospital, Carnarvon	...	...	...	"
Llangefni Hospital, Llangefni	...	...	...	"
Adelina Patti Hospital, Craig-y-nos	...	...	...	"
Machynlleth Hospital, Machynlleth	...	...	...	"
Kensington Hospital, St. Bride's	...	...	...	Surgical Cases in Children
Cefn Mably Hospital ...	...	...	...	Male and Female Pulmonary Cases

According to the Registrar-General's Returns of Causes of Death, you will notice that 3 persons (1 male and 2 females) died from Pulmonary Tuberculosis, and that 2 (1 male and 1 female) died from other Tuberculous Diseases; the total number of deaths being 5.

The Death-rate for Pulmonary Tuberculosis being $\cdot 39$ per 1,000 population.

The Death-rate from Other Forms of Tuberculosis being $\cdot 26$ per 1,000 population.

You will also notice that 4 cases of Tuberculosis were notified in 1925.

Deaths from Tuberculosis in preceding years:—

		1922	1923	1924
Pulmonary	...	7	6	8
Other Forms	...	4	2	2

The Milk Supply.

Number of Cow-keepers in District	...	...	19
Number of Cow-keepers registered	...	...	19
Number of Milk Sellers in District	..	...	33
Number of Milk Sellers registered	...	...	33
Total Number of Cowsheds in District	...	...	19
Number of Inspections made	...	...	19

The general conditions of these Cowsheds is **Poor.**

Milk is our most valuable food and also one of the cheapest, and this being so, it is absolutely necessary that it should be as pure as possible. The Cowsheds in this Area are not good, and so long as they are in a bad condition, so long will there be contamination and a possibility of Infection such as Enteric, Diphtheria, and Tuberculosis.

The Milk Sellers in the District are, however, taking care and are selling clean and good Milk to their customers, their Dairies being kept in good order and most of them scrupulously clean. But cleanliness in premises and utensils must be insisted upon, and all utensils should be cleansed by steam.

No legal action was taken during the year.

The bulk of Milk sold in this District comes from outside the Area, and proper supervision of the Milk Supply is impossible unless and until the Urban Area and the adjacent Rural Areas pursue a common plan in co-operation with each other.

Sanitary Administration.

Closest Accommodation.—The Pail Closet System is generally used. New Houses are provided with Water Closets in readiness for the new Sewerage System. The contents of the Pails are generally buried in the gardens; this practice will naturally disappear when better arrangements for disposal are made.

Slaughterhouses.—The Registered Slaughterhouses are kept in a satisfactory condition.

Factories and Workshops.—The Sanitary Conditions are satisfactory.

Disinfection.—Houses where Infectious Diseases have been notified are disinfected by the Sanitary Staff.

A *Thresh Disinfector* is owned by the Council, but it has never been properly housed, and therefore has not been used as yet.

The *Sanitary Staff* consists of the Medical Officer of Health (part-time) and the Sanitary Inspector (part-time).

Bye-Laws.—No Bye-Laws are in force. The Ministry of Health are pressing for Bye-Laws, and I wish to draw your attention to this lack of Bye-Laws.

Nuisance Inspections	...	...	...	600
No. of Informal Notices served	...	...	...	40
No. complied with	...	...	...	40
No. of Statutory Notices served	...	...	...	40
No. complied with	...	...	...	40

No legal proceedings were taken.

Housing.

A shortage of Houses exists in the Urban District, and overcrowding naturally results. This overcrowding cannot be good for the health of the District; but as accommodation cannot be found, it is of necessity put in the background.

Number of Plans submitted and passed	...	58
Number of New Houses completed	...	48
Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which Notices were served requiring Repairs	...	3
Number of Houses rendered fit by (a) Owners	...	3
(b) Local Authority	...	Nil

One Common Lodging House in Park Street, named "The Workmen's Rest," is the only Lodging House in the Urban Area. Total number of inspections made, 6. The condition of the house is poor, but certain improvements are being made; but much more is needed. No legal proceedings were taken.

As regards New Houses, the general standard is good and much superior to houses in many other Colliery Areas in the Kingdom. In this Urban Area, very few old thatched houses remain. Most of them are to be found at the farther end of Heol Las; these are quaint survivals, but can scarcely be considered as perfectly sanitary.

Your obedient Servant,

ERNEST INMAN,

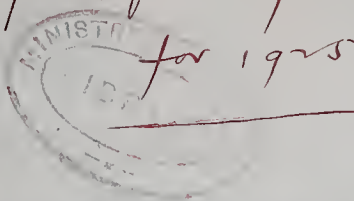
Medical Officer of Health.

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Ammanford U.D.
Supplementary Report of M.O.H.

To the Chairman and Members of the
Health Committee.



Mr. Chairman, Madam, & Gentlemen,

In answer to the questions regarding certain omissions in my report for 1925, I beg to submit the following answers -

1. During 1925 I have no record of arrangement for administering the Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924.
2. In regard to this question I would remind you that one river only, the River Amman runs through this Area and so far as this Area is concerned the only works near it is the Ammanford Colliery. Thanks to the Carmarthenshire County Council no pollution of the River Amman is now probable; such pollution as does occur is from works further up the valley, outside the Ammanford Urban district.

The other river, the chief river (of which the Amman is a tributary) is the Loughor or Llŷchwr: pollution of this river can occur from Tirytail, Pantyffynnon Collieries, and also from Pantyffynnon Tinworks, the amount of pollution from the latter is almost negligible and steps have been taken to abate it. As regards the other collieries, they are outside the Urban District and any further information as regards the pollution of the Llŷchwr can be obtained from the Districts adjoining this District; I may say here, that pollution of the Llŷchwr is not very serious for the same reason that holds good in the case of the Ammanford Colliery.

3. The water supply of the schools in the area is adequate for their needs: the sanitary condition is good with the exception of the Ammanford Council School which is liable to flooding in heavy rainfall, the flooding has occurred in the Infants' School on more than one occasion, but the cause of it has been located and remedied.
4. Poor Law relief in 1925 amounts to £2254. 2. 4.
5. No prosecutions were taken in respect to the sale of unsound meat or food; meat and food inspectors have always proved that there is nothing in the way of unsound meat or food exposed for sale.

Your obedient Servant,

(Sgd.) HENRY INMAN.

